
1. Introduction
This article brings information-studies and theoretical-linguistic perspectives on Biblical Hebrew (BH) lexicography to the review of The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew (DCH) completed in 2011. To develop criteria for the examination of this eight-volume dictionary, I first outline the theory of lexicography (§2), with a specific focus on the theory of dictionary criticism (§3). I then move on to an abridged history of BH lexicography in particular (§4).


In this light, I proceed to examine in some detail twenty randomly selected yet representative entries, supplemented by three loan words (from Akkadian, Aramaic, and Persian) and the two most frequent prepositions (§6). In the conclusion (§7), I speculate on the future of BH lexicography in the digital “dictionariate” age (Jackson 2002: 74, citing Ilson) of e-lexicography (Fuertes-Olivera & Bergenholtz 2011, Fuertes-Olivera 2013).

2. Lexicography
The term lexicography may be understood in two senses: first, the practical art or craft of writing dictionaries, i.e., applied lexicography (Fontenelle 2008); and second, the study and theory of lexicography as an independent academic discipline, or meta-lexicography (Jackson 2013). Meta-lexicography is the basis of this review. An important branch of meta-lexicography is the theory of dictionary criticism: the “forensic analysis” and evaluation of dictionaries (Bogaards 2013: 22, citing Coleman & Ogilvie).

At the outset, we must distinguish between lexicography and lexicology. Lexicology or lexical semantics is a branch of linguistics concerned with lexis (vocabulary versus grammar), lexemes (vocabulary items, including compounds, phrases and idioms), and the generative structure of the lexicon at the intersection of morphology and semantics (Cowie 2006; see further de
Blois 2013, Shead 2011, Geeraerts 2010, Lieber 2004). There have been marked advances in the study of lexical semantics, and the concomitant gap must be closed in order to keep lexicography on a sound linguistic basis (Apresjan 2000: xi).

A further consideration is lexicographical typology. Obviously, a pocket reference for students differs vastly from the massive scholarly “dictionaries of record” such as the Oxford English Dictionary and Le trésor de la language française; and it is among the latter that DCH must be classed. It must be emphasized that dictionaries of record are constructed primarily on historical principles. “The establishment of lexicography as a scholarly discipline on historical principles led to the establishment of scholarly dictionaries of record for many languages” (Hanks 2006: 114).

Thus, the task of the scholarly lexicographer is mostly if not primarily a historical one: “not only to define the meaning of words but also to trace their origins” (Hanks 2006: 114). For dictionaries of record, “an essential part of the lexicographical task is to explain not only the meaning but also the history and semantic development of each word, or at least of the main root words” (p. 125). In short, etymology is a relevant matter of lexical fact, and its absence marks a “radical departure” from the expected content and format of a dictionary of record (Jackson 2002: 127). In this connection, it is worth bearing in mind that etymology appears in every critical checklist (e.g., Crystal 2010: 115; Hanks 2006: 119; Nielson 2009: appendix, p. 41), often with an accent on foreign borrowings (Hanks 2006: 122).

Further consideration must be given to the subtype of such dictionaries of record that describe dead classical languages, such as Greek, Latin and Sanskrit, which have an ineliminable diachronic dimension. The enterprise is inherently historico-lexicographical, since it is necessarily “founded on attestations of the actual usage of each word” (Considine 2013: 149). “The analysis of quotations is, then, the fundamental task of the historical lexicographer” (p. 151): in other words, philology or “the branch of knowledge that deals with the historical, linguistic, interpretative, and critical aspects of literature” (OED 2014).

In some quarters, there has been a strong reaction against etymology and historical principles: in brief, against historical linguistics. Clearly etymology has no place in a dictionary of contemporary usage, or one designed for students of English as a second language. An emphasis on this practical and dynamic dimension has led to lexicography along strictly synchronic lines. “In the 20th century another school of lexicography grew up, the purpose of which was to explain the meaning and use of words in the contemporary language, relegating etymology ... to a subsidiary role.
Historical principles were superseded in the dictionaries by synchronic principles” (Hanks 2006: 115). Thus arises the essential tension between lexicographical typology and historical linguistics.

Computational lexicography continues to fuel much excitement. “The 1980s will one day be seen as a watershed in lexicography” (Crystal 2010: 115). First, the “corpus revolution” is still running its course, and corpus linguistics is maturing as a subdiscipline (Biber et al. 1998, O’Keeffe & McCarthy 2010). Gone are the days of introspective description; corpus-driven procedures now dominate, as in DCH. Second, the great promise of online publishing and increased functionality lacks only a clear business model, but the economics is becoming clearer (Hanks 2006: 126). (It is no coincidence that DCH devotes two pages (pp. I.8–10) to the chronic problems of funding a dictionary project.)

The buzzword now is e-lexicography: an information-scientific “discipline that is mainly concerned with the development, planning, compilation and publication of electronic reference tools” (Fuentes-Olivera 2013: 324). “Copycats”, or mere electronic copies of print dictionaries, are being eliminated in favor of hypertext and sophisticated search engines. The great institutional challenge is to discard those concepts no longer adequate for online works; and the related research challenge is analyzing methods, practices and concepts in this new environment (p. 326).

3. Dictionary Criticism

“ Assessing the quality of a dictionary is not a simple affair” (Bogaards 2013: 21). Dictionary criticism is “an area of lexicography that, through evaluations and appraisals, aims to contribute towards improving the quality of a dictionary or dictionaries or, for that matter, to help to further progress in lexicography per se” (Akasu 2013: 48). It is certainly the goal of the present review to further progress in BH lexicography, while sadly acknowledging that dictionary reviews are “generally ranked low among various types of scholarly writings” (Nielson 2009: 24).

Dictionary criticism may be simply descriptive. For example, we may be interested in academic critics as a class, and pursue a critique of their work and induce their working principles: what methods and criteria are actually employed (Trap-Jensen 2013). An enlightening study along these lines would be the critical examination of the corpus of all dictionary reviews published by, e.g., the International Journal of Lexicography. A more germane study of critics and their criticism of BH dictionaries would certainly be worth pursuing.
Instead, we are interested here in sound, meta-lexicographical methodology. This includes at least a careful analysis of the preface, introduction, and other front matter; the scope of the lexicographical tool set forth therein, as well as the overarching structure of the dictionary; a consideration of physical parameters; a random yet representative sampling of entries; and a principled critical checklist. Crucially, we want to identify the specific claims made in the prefatory material, and in particular claims regarding special features, that can be objectively tested. Specialists in dictionary criticism are hammering out internationally agreed standards of what constitutes a “good dictionary”, though there remains in certain quarters “a surprising lack of interest in general principles” (Akasu 2013: 49, citing Osselton).

4. BH Lexicography
This section briefly addresses BH lexicography in the English-speaking world, the world in which DCH is primarily competing. This is intended in no way to denigrate work in other traditions and scholarly languages, for which see Holtz (2013) and see further Brisman (1987, 2000).

Modern BH lexicography begins with Wilhelm Gesenius’s towering philological monument *Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alter Testament*. He is justly called the “father of modern Hebrew lexicography” (*BDB* vii), and praised for his “tireless diligence, philological insight and strong good sense” (pp. viii-ix).

Subsequently, a growing need was perceived for an updated “English Gesenius”, and this need was met with the gold standard of BH lexicography, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* by Brown, Driver and Briggs (1906). *BDB* is described as “the finest and most comprehensive Hebrew lexicon available to the English-speaking student” (*BDB* publisher’s preface); there is nothing that can “in any way rival the dominance of BDB in the English-speaking world” (*DCH* I.24). It is to be lamented that no major revision has since appeared, and arguably there is no longer a need for one (but see Hackett & Huehnergard 2008).

As Clines noted back in 1993, the English translation of Koehler and Baumgartner’s *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (1953; 2nd ed. 1958 + supplement) - which all biblical scholars have recognized as “one of the outstanding scholarly achievements of the post-war years” (Richardson in *HAL* vii) - as *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (1993), “will undoubtedly be a competitor” (*DCH* I.24). *HAL* clearly demarcates a new era in BH lexicography in the English-speaking world.
All dictionaries hitherto, as Holtz emphasizes, “maintain philology’s traditional etymological focus” (2013: II.509). Now, however, a markedly different approach is pursued by DCH (cf. Alonso Schökel 1994), in which meaning is strictly determined according to usage in context. Crucially, etymology is eliminated. Moreover, DCH extends coverage to “Classical” Hebrew (CH), defined as all attested Hebrew up to 200 CE, including Ben Sira and Qumran. It is to the front matter of DCH that we now turn.

5. Front Matter
A major task of dictionary criticism is the careful parsing of the preface and related front matter. It is the description of goods, the bill of sale. Unfortunately, this parsing and evaluation tends to get short shrift. “Most admit they have never bothered to read the Preface to their dictionary” (Crystal 2010: 112). We are obliged, however, to take this material very seriously: as DCH puts it, “it is our hope that it will be judged according to its own stated designs” (I.7). However, this would be disingenuous if the intention is to foreclose on criticism of the stated designs and principles themselves, let alone the application of “the norms with which scholars have long been familiar” (I.7).

DCH sets forth seven principles of their diction-making, and highlights two distinguishing characteristics. The first such characteristic is scope, which is the genesis of the adjective “classical”. By classical DCH means all texts prior to ca. 200 CE. This includes extra-biblical inscriptions, Ben Sira (Sir) and Qumran manuscripts, but excludes, e.g., the Mishnah and the subsequent treasure trove of rabbinic writing.

At least two questions arise regarding this first characteristic. First, what is the amount of the additional material? From vol. V onwards, DCH provides “new word statistics”, where new words are simply defined as “a word that did not appear” in BDB (DCH V.11; I assume here “word” is more or less “lemma”). The new-word counts are set out in Table 1 (the shaded cell indicates an addition error which is found in VII and repeated in VIII).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>volume in DCH</th>
<th>BDB</th>
<th>new words</th>
<th>combined</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>1304</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>1195</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>1489 [1491]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>1051</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>1631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totals</td>
<td>4504</td>
<td>2632</td>
<td>7134 [7136]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further, it is estimated that the additions constitute roughly 25% of the *BDB*, and break down as follows: 2% inscriptive, 3% Sir, 20% Qumran (*DCH* VIII.9-10). In short, *DCH* is bulked up with Qumran material (20% of *BDB* material), which takes the sting out of the possible criticism that *HAL* also covers Sir.

Second, what should we make of the designation “classical”? I suggest that most Hebrew scholars would consider that term contested. Simply consider that the adjective *classical* relates to “the form of a language established during the most highly developed stage of its history” and the literary output therein “constituting an acknowledged standard or model” (*OED* 2014). By this definition, the classical epitome and model of ancient Hebrew is surely the Pentateuch (minus the P source) and most of Samuel-Kings, together with the poetry of First Isaiah. By this definition, so-called Late Biblical Hebrew (LBH) and subsequent should be excluded.

Even granted the peculiar sense of “classical” in *DCH*, demarcation remains problematic. To take one example, Rendsburg tellingly writes that the “phase of the language known alternatively as Mishnaic Hebrew or more properly Tannaitic Hebrew is part and parcel of Classical Hebrew [in this sense]. Some may argue otherwise; but everyone, I think, would agree that if a dictionary were to include Nahal Hever and Wadi Murabba‘at texts, then certainly tannaitic texts should be included too” (1996: 114f). In for a Qumran penny, in for a Tannaitic pound.

The second distinguishing feature of *DCH* is the absence of etymology which, as we saw above regarding dictionaries of record, is a radical departure: this is “not a conventional Hebrew dictionary” (*I.27*). Why the departure? “Unlike previous dictionaries, the Dictionary of Classical Hebrew has a theoretical base in modern linguistics” (*DCH* I.14). Immediately the question arises: what “modern” linguistics? This is a bold claim, yet there is no substantial outline of “the commonly accepted principles of modern linguistic theory” (*I.15*) presupposed in *DCH* - neither authorities nor references - a surprising omission.

It becomes clear that the intended contrast is between “philology” in a pejorative sense and modern linguistics (*I.25*): diachronic (bad), synchronic (good). Modern linguistics in this special sense primarily entails that “the overriding concern in this dictionary [is] for the *uses* of words in the language, especially the regular and normal uses in the written texts; we subscribe to the dictum that the meaning of a word is its use in the language ... The focus here ... on the patterns and combinations in which words are used” (*I.14f*). It might come as a surprise that *BDB* and *HAL* do not focus on patterns and combinations. Indeed, it is conceded that they do so focus. The
rejoinder is that previous dictionaries “never explicitly” do so: “What is lacking is any systematic exploitation of the data” (I.25). The point is “to organize and rationalize the available data about Hebrew words” (I.26). Yet modern linguistics has no monopoly on organization and rationalization. Crucially, cognates and etymology are eliminated. “Such information has become traditional in Hebrew lexica of the last two centuries, but its presence in a Hebrew dictionary is highly problematic, and it is difficult to see what purpose it serves. Theoretically speaking ... strictly irrelevant to the Hebrew language” (I.17 emphasis added). This is an audacious claim indeed; but, as we will see below, it is untrue is its strong form.

The exclusion of etymology “greatly simplifies, of course, the task of the lexicographer” (BDB viii), and it must be admitted that the “published materials for the study of the languages cognate with Hebrew have reached such proportions as to tax even the most industrious in any extended comparison of kindred words” (BDB ix). If that were true one hundred years ago, imagine how taxed the industrious are now! Furthermore, there are many “practical objections”; e.g., “it compels the editor to seem to decide ... some questions of etymology” - though the number of such cases is characterized as “comparatively small” (BDB x).

On the other hand, the cognate languages have undoubtedly “yielded new treasures” and “have contributed to a far more comprehensive and accurate knowledge of the Hebrew vocabulary” (BDB vii). Accordingly, “one must question very seriously the decision not to include cognate material” (Rendsburg 1996: 113). Rendsburg, in reviewing vol. I ק, offers a telling example: the hapax אֶטֶמָס is parsed as a plural noun, but is in fact derived from Akkadian eṭemmu - there is no evidence for a plural. Lexicography, he asserts, “cannot proceed as if the language in question existed in a vacuum. If the editors wish to eschew cognates, fine, but at the very least loanwords demand special attention” (p. 113). Moreover, while it is true that the amount of published material is daunting, there is a new generation of reference works that greatly simplifies the sifting: e.g., The Use of Arabic in Biblical Hebrew Lexicography (Kaltner 1996), or more recently An Akkadian Lexical Companion for Biblical Hebrew (Tawil 2009).

There are consequences for omitting etymology, however, and we will be exploring some below. It is sufficient here to offer one obvious example: in DCH, “attention is paid primarily not to the unusual and difficult words but to the common words” (I.15). It may be countered that it is precisely the unusual and difficult words for which one first reaches for a dictionary. Alternatively, “one might ask, why bother with including rare words at all?” (Rendsburg 1996: 118).
The obverse of the second principle is the fourth. “For most purposes we regard the classical language as constituting a single phase in the history of the Hebrew language” (*DCH* I.16). Therefore, a millennium of Hebrew is treated “as if it were a synchronic system” (I.16). The logic of synchronicity clearly conduces to this position. On the other hand, some might see this as a *reductio ad absurdum*. Imagine, e.g., treating the Anglo-Saxon of *Beowulf* through to *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* as if it constituted “a single phase in the history” of the English language.

The third principle also gives pause. *DCH* follows a “strictly alphabetical principle” to render the dictionary “user-friendly”, but then verbs are listed by lexical roots “no matter how suspect such forms may be methodologically speaking” (I.15). To the last point, the convention of lemmatizing verbs by the past tense, third masculine singular, of the basic stem is consistent with the alphabetical principle, so it is not clear what “suspect” methodologically speaking might mean.

To the first point, it all depends on what *user* actually means. If we mean tyros, e.g., then it might seem that the alphabetical principle wins hands-down. However, this misses the real trade-offs between listing by lexical roots and listing alphabetically, and on balance, the alphabetical principle might actually be at a disadvantage.

The criticism of the lexico-radical principle is that it increases the difficulty of look-up. Not necessarily. In *BDB*, problematic nouns are listed alphabetically with a see-also reference. Moreover, *BDB* is now bound with an index matching the numbering system of an exhaustive concordance with the dictionary’s column numbers, obviating most difficulties. Finally, there is a very sound morpho-typological argument: “The relation of Semitic derivatives to the stems is such as to make this method of grouping them an obvious demand from a scientific point of view” (*BDB* x).

Consider the flip-side. Alphabetic listing is not without problems, setting aside the inflated fascicles for ָ and ַ. A few examples will suffice. The inconsistent *plene* spelling necessitates additional see-also references. Morphologically, by-forms demand separate lemmata, and semantically, distinct senses also demand separate lemmata (cf. English *bank*₁, *bank*₂, *bank*₃). Finally, for all non-verbals, there will necessarily be a see-also reference to the lexical root. Thus, the question is not obviously decided in favor of the alphabetical principle.

In passing, let us applaud the fifth principle of gender-inclusivity. Let us also take note of the sixth policy on emendations: “We do not regard this as lexicographers’ business” (*DCH* 17), but in practice, emendations adopted by *BDB*, *HAL* and the critical apparatus *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* are
incorporated. (Does that mean that the critical apparatus of *Quinta* will be incorporated in any later edition?) The aversion to evaluating and recommending emendations might be commended, “but one must question why list proposed emendations at all ... I know of no linguistic approach which would waste time and space dealing with proposed emendations” (Rendsburg 1996: 115).

6. Critique of Entries
The twenty-six entries for critique (Table 2) were chosen as follows. For each letter of the alphabet (excluding ר and ש), more or less the fifth lemma was chosen, with an eye to a representative sample of verbs, nouns and proper names. To include loan words, a lexeme was chosen a few items into each language section of Kogan (2013): Akkadian (טפסר), Aramaic (verb טלל cf. BH טלל), Persian (דה). As to prepositions, the most frequently occurring were taken from Jenni (2013: table 1, p. III.208).

Table 2

| verb (8) | הנור, הקיר, צעบา, מסא, תבה, בר, הבר, אבד |
| noun (10) | תמאור, סקפה, נאמ, לוכב, יאר,湖区, דאה, זאא, שיאא, ראמ |
| proper noun (3) |ębם, לאה, באה לודר ראנ |
| loan (3) | הטפסר, זח |
| preposition (2) |ל, ב |

We begin with the eight verbs in the three reference works. While derivatives are not grouped under one lexical root as in *BDB*, effectively the see-also references of *HAL* and *DCH* duplicate the lexico-radical structure, raising again the question of the advantages of the alphabetical principle. The more interesting question is the extent to which syntagmatic and paradigmatic differences are prominent in the comparison of the microstructures of the three dictionaries. Table 3 is a partial summary of the microstructure for אבד.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>בד</th>
<th>HAL</th>
<th>DCH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>headings</td>
<td>3+3+2 = 8</td>
<td>7+3+1 = 11</td>
<td>4+2+1 = 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piel</td>
<td>cause to perish, destroy, kill</td>
<td>destroy</td>
<td>kill, destroy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Broadly, we see a trend in HAL to multiply subheadings. A comparison for the piel binyan (D-stem) characterizes the different approaches. BDB distinguishes among literal and figurative uses, and also extensively uses phrasing such as “cause to X”, motivated by capturing the relation between basic and derived binyanim. HAL is more likely to separate out stray uses. DCH can get away with fewer distinctions, because so much is packed into the separate microstructures of subject <SUBJ> and object <OBJ>.

DCH gives an exhaustive count 185.11.30, by which we understand 185 tokens from the Bible; 11 from Sir; and 30 from Qumran (13% of the 226). The subentry #1 is broken down into two parts: 1a. “die” and 1b. “be about to die”. The latter is annotated “always ptc. except Nm 17:27”, which seems to miss the significant linguistic generalization regarding the semantic interpretation of the participle.

The three synonyms <SYN> recorded are שׁמד ni. be destroyed, give יבשׁ dry up, and נדח ni. be expelled. It is not clear by what principle these have been selected. If by parallels indicated by “||”, there are over 20 to chose from in the entry.

The DCH entry for הבר is given in full below. Note that there is a dagesh missing in בַכּוֹכָבִים. Note that the asterisk identifies supernumerary lemmata, and the user is directed to “see the Bibliography for discussion of the existence of this word” (VIII.104). Below we have an example both of ketiv/qere (Kt/Qr), and the reduplication of lemmata forced by the variant semantics. Table 4 gives a comparison of treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exact meaning</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fig. cause to vanish, blot out, do away with</td>
<td>lose</td>
<td>(Eccl 3:6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cause to stray, lose</td>
<td>give up as lost (Eccl 3:6)</td>
<td>lose, waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cause to perish (Jer 23:11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ubre I 1 vb. **Divide** - Qal Pf. Kt: הבר (1QIsa) - with ref. to astrologers dividing the heavens, <SUBJ> not specified, Is 47:13 (or em. והבר those who search; + והבר look at stars). <OBJ> השמיים heaven Is 47:13 (or em.; see Subj.).

The comparison in Table 4 is curious. *DCH* includes the Qumran token that confirms the *Qr*, but so does *HAL* (note the typographical error); however, only *BDB* speculates on the *Kt* reading. All capture the sense of division with reference to astrology, but only *HAL* invokes the LXX reading ἀστρόλογοι - which is surely relevant here. *BDB* considers the general problem as a corruption of חקרי, and *DCH* duly records the emendation (em.). Both *BDB* and *HAL* suggest *divide the heavens*, but *DCH* is silent on the translation.

The value of cognates in *HAL* is evident here: the Ugaritic (Ug.) sense is also invoked, hence *worshippers*. But then notice *DCH*: while boldly eschewing cognates, it nevertheless presents two separate entries, directly corresponding to the Arabic versus Ugaritic in *HAL* - crucially, without any motivation or explanation.

I now turn to highlighting items of interest in the remaining *DCH* entries with reference to *BDB* and *HAL*.

*DCH* offers a special sense for just Sir 4:27 *act defiantly*. This token is absent from *HAL*, which suggests some care must be taken with Sir tokens.

*BDB* indicates that the verb is a late Aramaic loan word, a fact that must figure into the calculation of both use and context. *HAL* asserts "Old Heb. verb, which was replaced by נָבַל, but under Aram. influence was later
revived”, which demands explanation but, no doubt, reflects a different assessment of times of composition of individual texts. It is not clear why Sir 12:5 and 15:2 are singled out for separate subentries in *DCH*.

All three separate out Nm 4:23 and 8:24 from Ex 38:8 and 1Sm 2:22. *BDB* associates the first with Levites, the second with women; whereas in *DCH*, the emphasis is on transitive versus intransitive uses. Curiously, *DCH* creates a third partition for “cultic servant” which only reduplicates Ex 38:8, but with the annotation “part. as n.” This again suggests some confusion around the participle in *DCH*: morphology, syntax, semantics and use.

*BDB* is forced to list the noun under חֲבָה because of the morphology, with a redirection to חַבָּה. *HAL* redirects to חַבָּה for the same morphological reason, which in turn redirects to חֲבָא as the by-form. (*HAL* helpfully supplies the Jewish Aramaic חֲבָּיָה hiding place.) Curiously, *DCH* does this backwards: it first redirects to חֲבָא not חֲבָה - as might be expected - and then redirects back to חֲבָה.

*DCH* takes the defectiva spelling as the lemma, with a redirection from the plene, as do *BDB* and *HAL*. *DCH* cannot in principle make the connection that this is an Egyptian loan word from yrw river.

This is a case where the *DCH* alphabetical principle should trump the lexico-radical, but in fact *BDB* redirects from the alphabetical listing: no difficulty in looking up the noun. *HAL* reconstructs the Semitic *kabkab* with reference to Ugaritic *kbkb*. Both *BDB* and *HAL* relate “star” to the root כּבּכּ “burn”.

Only *HAL* redirects to the root חֲנַה groan, growl. Perhaps this might be an instance of the etymological fallacy?

There are three tokens: כְּסָבְאָם Is 1:22, כְּסָבְאָם Hos 4:18 and כְּסָבְאָם Na 1:10, and the last is the crux. *BDB* redirects to כְּסָבָא, otherwise only attested in the *Qr* of Ez 23:42 כְּסָבָאִים drunkards. *HAL* raises the question as to the nature of the drink: either wine with LXX and Vulgate, or Akkadian beer. *HAL* also creates a separate lemma for both Na 1:10 and Ez 23:42 (*Q*): bindweed on the basis of LXX and context.

As a result, *DCH* must make sense of this confusion. First, כְּסָבְאָם Na 1:10 appears under כְּסָבָא with *BDB*. Second, the redirections of *BDB* and *HAL* must be recorded as emendations (em.). Finally, כְּסָבָא must be split into two lemmata: I drunkard, and *II* bindweed. Here we see inconsistencies: *DCH* is not supposed to devote attention to “the unusual and difficult words” (I.15); nor is it interested in emendation or Greek translation.

Both *DCH* and *HAL*, applying the alphabetical principle, must create two separate lemmata for the noun, because of the by-form חֲפָרָה;
whereas *BDB* can do with one lemma, incorporating the by-form into its listing of tokens.

*DCH* mystifyingly asserts that this is a “wild ox (*Bos primigenius*), rather than buffalo or antelope or unicorn”. Whence the certainty, and what of the other quadrupeds? Here is clearly a case where the *DCH* lack of etymology and cognates leaves much to be desired. With reference to the analysis in *HAL*, we can hunt down the other creatures: Ugartic *buffalo*, Arabic *antelope*, and LXX *unicorn*. Yet “it is difficult to see what purpose” this puzzling note serves if “theoretically speaking” such material is “strictly irrelevant to the Hebrew language” (I.17).

Ps 40:3 is the crux of the problem: a pit of something. *BDB* speculates about a pit of roaring waters. *HAL* instead creates two lemmata, the first just for Ps 40:3 read as *pit of wasteland*. However, *DCH* ends up with four lemmata. It splits off lemma II for the reading of Ps 40:3 as *wasteland* and lemma III for *mud* - another reading of Ps 40:3 (?). Lemma IV covers an alternative reading as the name *Shaon* in Jer 48:45. There does seem something excessive in multiplying lemmata, but this is logical outcome of the declared principles of *DCH*.

The name Leah is unexplained in *DCH* by first principles. *HAL* adduces Arabic and Akkadian cognates for *cow*. This is surely not irrelevant, since Rachel is *ewe*, a direct connection made in *BDB*.

In *DCH* the name remains unparsed as *Obed-edom*; however, the see-also references imply the translation. Confusion arises here because of 2Chr 25:24. In *HAL* the token is embedded in the second division “head of the family of doorkeepers and singers”. However, this token is given its own third division in both *BDB* and *DCH*: the family itself versus the Levitical head of that family in *BDB*; and the “custodian of temple treasures at the time of Amaziah” versus the Levite in *DCH*. The explanation of this confusion is beyond the scope of this study.

*BDB* shows interest in *Edom* as an obviously theophoric element: servant of (god) *Edom* and name of god? *HAL* also redirects to the theophoric “n.div.”, but there is no follow-up under *אדום*. However, in *DCH* there is no entry for the theophory; rather, there is simply the subheading “3. in pr.n.m.” with the redirection to *Obed-edom*.

Let us move on to the treatment of loanwords in DCH and the consequences thereof, while recalling that “it is difficult to see what purpose it serves. Theoretically speaking ... strictly irrelevant to the Hebrew language” (I.17).

Akkadian *ṭūpsarru*. Arguably, this is a case of variants: *טִפְסָר* Jer 51:27, and either *טַפְסֵר* (*BDB*) or *טַפָּסָר* (*HAL* with reference to Jewish
Aramaic טַפְסָרָא in Na 3:17. Accordingly, we should expect two lemmata for the by-forms. We must infer from HAL and DCH, however, that this splitting of entries does not extend to Tiberian pronunciation, only the consonants b- ut then why vocalize, or prefer the Qr?

BDB suggests marshal. HAL suggests official, but separates military (Jer 51:27) from administrative (Na 3:17) uses in context. Curiously, DCH suggests scribe (?), official. Whence scribe (?), if not the Akkadian etymology?

Aramaic √טלל. BDB conspicuously gathers the Hebrew and Aramaic roots: I (Hebrew dew) and II (Aramaic roof) respectively, and a direct connection is drawn between the latter and the Hebrew √טלל. Since the loan is Aramaic, HAL adduces much Aramaic data. The question arises: is it irrelevant that the Aramaic loan appears only in Neh 3:15? Perhaps it is in this case.

Persian dâta דא. Crucially, Persian is only used in the Persian period (BDB), and this must have a bearing on use in context. The difficulty here is the old chestnut in Dt 33:2: Kt תודאה, Qr וְאֶשׁ. The Qr inserts the Persian word דא into Dt 33, which seems prima facie absurd (Rendsburg 1996: 113). The complication is the treatment of the Kt תודאה. BDB states that the text is corrupt, referring obliquely to many proposed emendations (cf. Rendsburg 1996: n. 3, p. 113, referring to his own study of this matter). HAL redirects to the Kt, granting with Rendsburg that the explanation of תודאה must be sought elsewhere. Among emendations, both BDB and HAL seem to favour דא יֹק, a burning fire.

Since this is the case, it is puzzling why there is no redirection in DCH from דא to the Kt. If one looks up the Kt anyway, one is redirected “see √אש, Nom. Cl. [noun clause]”. Dt 33:2 is placed under “1. supernatural fire. a. assoc. with theophany, etc. Y.” (It is in no way clear why theophanous fire (1a) should take pride of place among uses.) Scanning to <NOM CL>, we find “appar. at his right hand fire was law for them Dt 33:2(Qr) (Kt תודאה).” In the end, then, there is no treatment of the Kt in DCH, and the Persian loan of the Persian period is left in Dt 33:2 without comment.

I conclude the review of entries with observations on BH prepositions. Jenni lists the six most frequent prepositions, indicating that these “represent about ninety percent of the occurrences in the text” of the Hebrew Bible (2013: III.208). I replicate his table here as Table 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic form</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Occurrences (approx.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 5
My reinterpretation of Jenni’s encyclopedia article prefaces the dictionary criticism below. Consider the following syntactic tree.

\[
V' \\
V \\
\text{P''} \\
\text{X} \\
\text{P'} \\
\text{P} \\
\text{Y}
\]

The translation must be derived by strict composition, adding the contributions of the governing verb (V), the preposition (P) itself, the nature of the object of the preposition (here Y) as well as the specifier (here X). Because of these multiple contributions, it is possible to radically underspecify the semantics of the preposition (Jenni 2013: §5).

Generally, and especially in the case of prepositions, there is an inverse relation between frequency and semantic specificity, hence the most frequent prepositions “denote the mere existence of a relationship between the two correlates” (III.210): here X and Y. For \( \text{ל} \), he rightly claims a “bare relation between two entities” (III.210), and for \( \text{ב} \), he insightfully argues that its value derives for the most part from the object Y itself (III.210).

Finally, for Jenni, diachrony plays a central role in determining the value of the prepositions in context. Thus, e.g., only in LBH under Aramaic influence can \( \text{ל} \) function as the direct-object marker; and furthermore, it is only at this time that the semantics bleaches to the point that \( \text{ל} \) indicates “any free direction” (III.210f).

Because of its emphasis on syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations, we might expect *DCH* to shine in the treatment of prepositions, and yet still run afoul of the diachronic facts. One way we might expect *DCH* to differ is in the number of headings required, but surprisingly this is in fact not the case. *DCH* more or less replicates the other treatments: *BDB* 23 headings for \( \text{ב} \), *HAL* 24, *DCH* 18.
Following modern semantic principles we should expect only one underspecified sense, with any combination of parts of speech: the sense and use of the preposition being derived straightforwardly by composition. The temporal use of ב during, while, e.g., follows straightforwardly from the collocation with abstract nouns denoting times, while the instrumental use with is derived by combination with instruments. Perhaps another lemma could be justified by anomalous uses, but with explanatory references to cognates and diachrony. Thus the equivalence with יָב can be explained with reference to Ugaritic and Phoenician ב.

Regarding the most frequent preposition ב, points made by Pardee (2003: 60) bear repeating. “The principle of exhaustive citation of all occurrences of a given word was, however, dropped in the cases of ... particles, and the citations are only, therefore, representative”. This is understandable, but then compare, e.g., the exhaustive citation of יָב. The lack of exhaustive citation, however, becomes problematic in “the case of disputed interpretations”. It would have “been more useful to have what the author of the entry and/or editors consider to be the full list of occurrences”.

Pardee’s parade example is the ablative use from, since. Because of the bibliographical reference to Dahood, “one would expect the list of examples ... to be much longer than the one case cited (Ps. 29:10)”. This is the more puzzling because “this one example is not particularly convincing, [and] one wonders why it was chosen over others”. Moreover, it leaves the impression that there is only one such token. Is that the case? Pardee’s conclusion is worth emphasizing. “This would have been an interesting case study in the lexicographic method chosen for this dictionary: there are a good number of verses where one might admit the English translation ‘from’”. Indeed, the case studies can be multiplied.

I will add two further concerns. First, DCH entries do not list or redirect to the by-forms יָב and יָב, which is strikingly odd, even granted the stated approach to lemmatization. Second, if the intention is to provide both syntagmatic and paradigmatic analysis, why is there no compare-and-contrast between related uses: ב and ב share “of instrument”, “of accompaniment”, “of cause”, and “introducing object”.

I conclude by drawing attention to some very helpful features of the DCH entries on the prepositions. First, while there is not exhaustive citation, there is a statistical summary, e.g., in the case of ב †15722.†606.†c.4500.†99 (but why circa, then?). Second, after forms with and without suffixes, there is an additional entry sorting out the many Kt/Qr confusions among prepositions. Third, the lengthy entries come with an initial summary of uses keyed to the numbered subsections and to the respective page numbers.
7. Conclusion
This review began with a brief outline of lexicography. The principles in the front matter of *DCH* were thoroughly critiqued. Finally, random entries were examined in varying detail. It remains here to assess the dictionary in this light, and then to speculate on the future of BH lexicography.

Reviews have been mixed. Consider Rendsburg (1996): “It is not difficult to see the massive amount of excellent work that went into the production of this new dictionary of ancient Hebrew. Unfortunately, it is equally easy to see its faults and failings” (p. 111). Most of the faults flow from the decision to treat a millennium of Hebrew synchronically, as we have seen, and consequently, to eliminate cognates and etymology. Minor failings were flagged in the review of entries.

There is much, however, that can be said on the positive side. “We may conclude that the authors of this innovative dictionary provide us with a helpful tool. Its main new features are the inclusiveness of its source material and its ordering of the data inspired by the new linguistic methods” (Lust 2003: §6). As we have seen, inclusiveness of source material amounts to the addition of Qumran material (*HAL* already includes Sir). This cannot be a bad thing in itself, and is certainly a boon to students of LBH or Tannaitic Hebrew.

As to the *DCH* “ordering of the data”, it would take a much more detailed analysis to thoroughly test the claims against *BDB* and *HAL*. Yet the benefits of organization and rationalization (*DCH* I.26) have been recognized. To take one example, Pardee (2003) notes with apparent enthusiasm that “the reader consulting this entry [on the tetragrammaton] will pretty much see everything that Yahweh … is depicted as doing in the Hebrew Bible” (p. 60).

My own *modus operandi* has been to work from my tattered *BDB*, and to consult *HAL* on the reference shelf as required. I would now want the benefit of consulting *DCH* as well, and so can recommend its purchase for research libraries.

On the other hand, I expect *DCH* to be the last print dictionary for ancient Hebrew. What the landscape looked like in 1993 is not clear, but what it looks like in 2014 is. The future is electric. Uncertainties regarding the future of lexicography abound, “not least among them the question of the role of print” (Considine 2013: 160). “The challenge for lexicography in digital times is that dictionaries will definitely change their appearance and most likely will lose status and run the risk of drowning in the profusion of other resources with which they compete for user attention” (Trap-Jensen 2013: 46). The next iteration of *DCH*, if there be one, will look and function
much like the online version of the *OED*, and no doubt subject to a similar business model.

In conclusion, let us sing the praise of lexicographers, those “unhappy mortals” toiling “at the lower employments of life”; and while exegetes of genius “press forward to conquest and glory”, let us bestow “a smile on the humble drudge that facilitates their progress” (Johnson 1755: preface). “For the pessimist, it may be a comfort that nothing suggests that the need for lexicographical data is diminishing” (Trap-Jensen 2013: 46).

**Bibliography**


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